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The Causes of the German Emigration  
to America, 1848 to 1854

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THE CAUSES OF THE GERMAN EMIGRATION  
TO AMERICA, 1848 TO 1854

BY

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A. B. Rockford College, 1912

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

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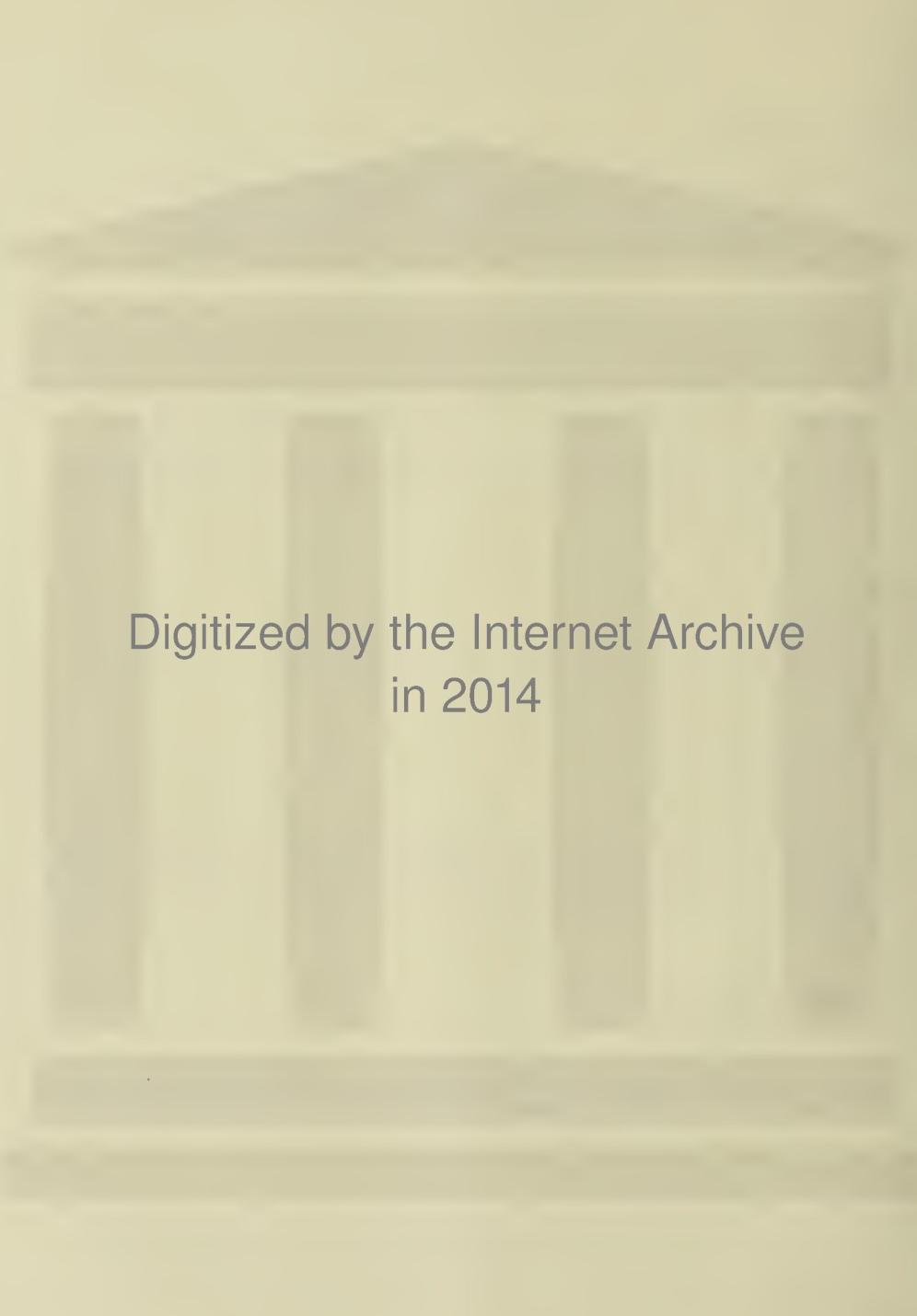
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## THE CAUSES OF GERMAN EMIGRATION TO AMERICA

1848 - 1854.

### CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.

Emigration previous to 1848; Comparison of the German with the French, English, and Irish Emigration; Character of German Emigrants.

The stream of German emigration to our shores has been in a series of waves rather than in a steady current. It commenced with the arrival of a few German artisans in the Jamestown Colony of 1607, and continues to the present, although since 1892 it has been steadily decreasing and is to-day inconsiderable.

The chief reason for the exodus of the seventeenth century was the economic distress following the destructive wars of the times, and especially was this true of the Palatinate whence came most of the emigrants. The crops in this section were destroyed four times during the Thirty Years' War, and again by Louis XIV in 1674 and in 1688, leaving a pauper population with no choice except between starvation or emigration. A second cause was the religious confusion following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and the persecution of certain Protestant sects, such as the Quakers and Mennonites and in some states the Lutherans and German Reformed. The tyranny of the princes of the smaller of the numerous states into which Germany was divided and the heavy taxes which they imposed on the people constitute a



third motive for leaving the fatherland.

The number of those who came during this period was comparatively small, but it increased during the first half of the eighteenth century, five thousand arriving in Philadelphia in 1754 alone.<sup>1</sup> The reasons were the same as during the preceding period, but they operated with greater force, and there were in addition certain artificial aids. For instance in 1709 Queen Anne of England promised transportation to those who would come to England and thence to the colonies. It was her plan to form a buffer state between the Indians and the English settlers, but so many arrived in England that the Lords of Trade were puzzled as to what to do with all of them; there were thirteen thousand in London by October, 1709; of these only seventy-five hundred could be shipped to the colonies, while the rest were employed in various trades and pursuits in England.<sup>2</sup> It was also the case that the information sent back by the emigrants stirred the "Wanderlust" of the people at home, while the activity of emigration agents increased it so much that large numbers came, especially to Pennsylvania.

During the latter part of the century emigration practically ceased, and it is generally supposed that from 1790 to 1820 it was very slight, but there are no statistics either to prove or disprove this. The years from 1815 to 1820, however, probably brought an increased number, for Würtemberg had suffered

1 Rahr: German Emigration 1840-1850, p 1.

2 Faust: German Element in the United States, i.79.



much from the Napoleonic Wars and so would be apt to supply a large contingent; While the persecution of the student societies, beginning in 1817, would probably drive others into exile.

In general the causes for the rise and fall in the wave of emigration during the nineteenth century are economic, the increase commonly corresponding to economic decline in parts of Germany, and simultaneous prosperity, or at least opportunity, in the United States. Coupled with this during the first part of the period was political discontent and oppression.

Political repression, over-population, and the ruin in the western provinces of Prussia of the small hand-industries in competition with the newly introduced factory system, caused the first great wave of emigration between 1830 and 1840. The second influx comes between 1848 and 1854, and brings a larger volume than any other six consecutive years although the crest does not rise as high as in 1852 when over two hundred and fifty thousand Germans arrived in America.<sup>1</sup> The Irish emigrants are the only ones who outnumber the Germans during this period, as may be shown by curves of emigration for Ireland, Germany, France, and England.<sup>2</sup> In 1854 more Germans came to America than Irish, but in 1855, although the Germans still outnumbered the emigrants from other nations, only about one-third as many came as during the preceding year and the number does not approach the figure of that year again until 1881 and 1882.<sup>3</sup>

1 See below, p 5.

2 ibid.

3 ibid.

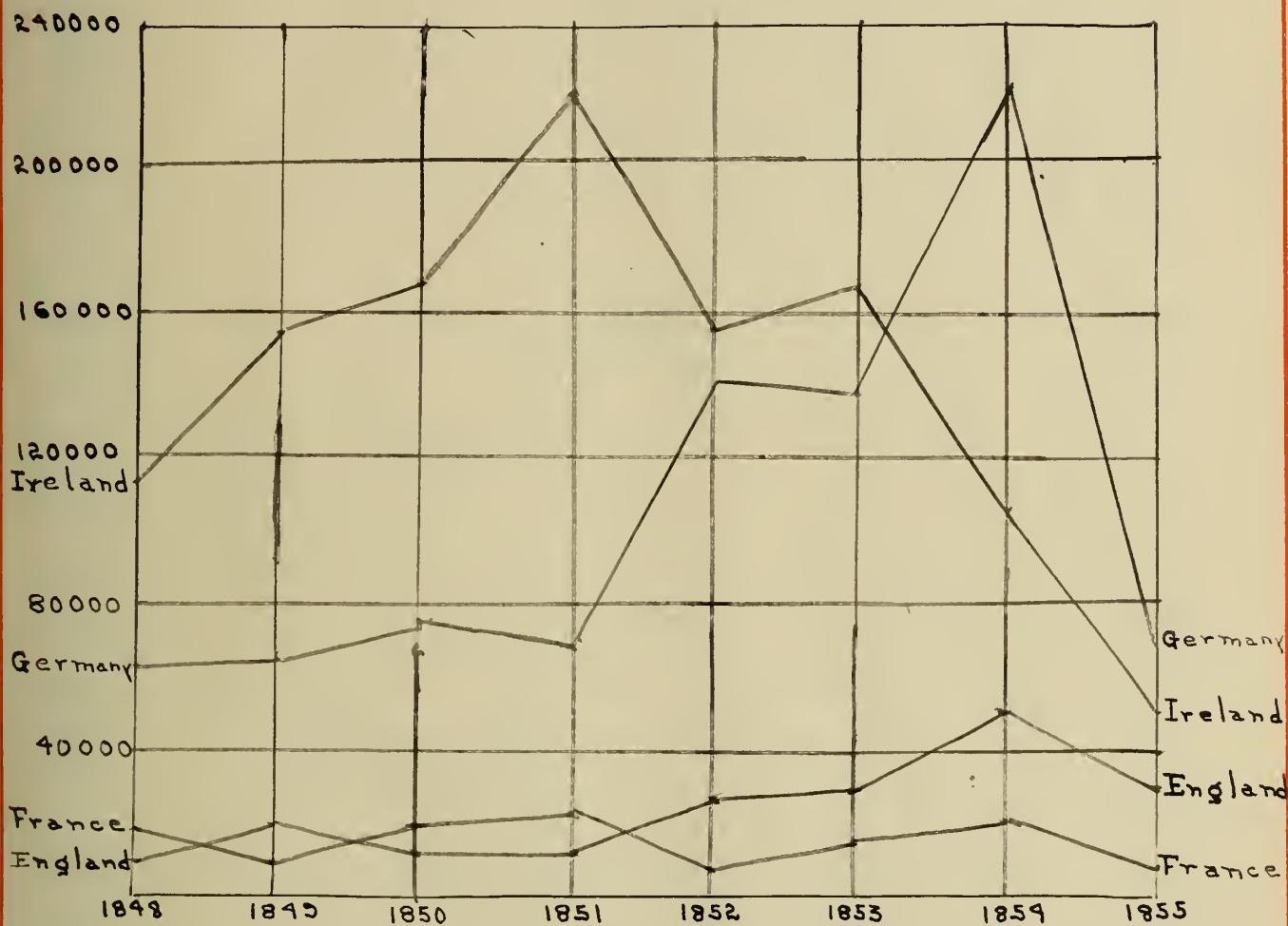


But it was for quality as well as for quantity that the German emigration of this period was noted, for their general character was considerably better than that of most emigrants. Intermingled with the masses were many refugees from political oppression and espionage, men who, if tolerated in their own country, would have become influential there. For example there came a group to Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, who were mostly men of means of the agricultural class, but among them were a professor of language, an editor of a newspaper, a physician, and a poet.<sup>1</sup> Besides such influential men as Carl Schurz, many whose careers were destined to be more obscure still brought with them to their adopted country high and noble ideals.

<sup>1</sup> Wis.Hist.Collections, XIV.365.



Curves of Emigration from Ireland, Germany, France, and England to the United States, 1848 to 1855. Constructed from data in U. S. Immigration Reports, ii. passim.



German Emigration. Compiled from ibid.

1848	58,465
1849	60,235
1850	78,896
1851	72,482
1852	145,918
1853	141,946
1854	215,009
1855	71,918
1882	250,630



CHAPTER II.  
RELIGIOUS CAUSES.

Religious emigration previous to 1848; Protestant dissatisfaction; Growth of free-thinking; German Catholicism; Effects of religious disturbance.

Since the arrival of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620, America has been a place of refuge for all those religious sects which were denied freedom of worship in European countries. Lord Calvert founded Maryland in order that the Catholics might still be able to use the rites of the Catholic Church, and William Penn obtained a tract of land from the king to give a place of refuge to Quakers.

Though Germany never established a religious settlement of her own, since she owned no part of the New World, yet she contributed a great many emigrants to the colonies of other countries. By the general acceptance of the principle, "cujus regio, eius religio", in the Peace of Augsburg in 1555,<sup>1</sup> each prince might decide the religion of his territory, and all had to conform to it or leave the state. This naturally produced a large emigration of Lutherans and Catholics from those states in which the prince was an adherent of the opposing faith, but a considerable number of emigrants were Separatists, Quakers, Herron hatters, Anabaptists, and Mennonites, who were tolerated in no section.

Nor was religious persecution a cause of emigration during the early times only; it continued to operate even during

<sup>1</sup> Cambridge Modern Hist., iii. 140.



the nineteenth century, and rulers still tried to determine the religion of their country. In Prussia Frederick William III had issued a decree in 1817 ordering a union of the Lutheran and Reformed or Calvinistic Churches.<sup>1</sup> These two forms of the Protestant faith had existed in Germany since the sixteenth century, the former being the stronger in the northern and the latter in the southern, or, more exactly, the southwestern parts. The chief difference between the two sects lay in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper: the Lutherans believed that the body and blood of Christ were really present in the bread and wine; while the Calvinists taught that these were rather symbols of the Lord's spiritual presence.

The Rationalists, however, did not believe in dogma; to them love was the essence of Christianity,<sup>2</sup> and religion was a matter of individual conduct, not of church organization. Thus in the nineteenth century, to many thinkers the old dogmatic strife was ridiculous, and the best thing to do was to return to the old unity of faith. Schleiermacher preached this and firmly believed that in such a concept of religion lay the solution of all problems,<sup>3</sup> but while he was the spokesman of this doctrine, Frederick William III was the one who first tried to carry it into practice. "According to my opinion", he said, "the communion

1 Wisconsin Historical Collections, xiv. 344

2 Cushman's Hist. of Philosophy, ii. 64

3 ibid, ii. 341



strife is only an unfruitful theological subtlety, of no account in comparison with the fundamental faith of the Scriptures".<sup>1</sup> He was a member of the Reformed Church,<sup>2</sup> which emphasized moral character, and so to him union seemed a more simple matter than it did to a member of the Lutheran Church, which laid more stress on doctrine.

Accordingly in 1817, the three hundredth anniversary of the Reformation in Germany, he proclaimed the union of the two churches. The consent of the churches was not obtained for this action, but nevertheless in 1830 by cabinet orders the use of the new agende or prayer-book of 1822 was strictly enjoined.<sup>3</sup> This superseded the old forms of worship; henceforth the Lutheran and Reformed Churches ceased to exist legally in Prussia, and in their place was substituted the Evangelical Church, as it was called. The word "Evangelical" had to be substituted in all writings and publications in place of the word "Protestant". The old church services were abolished, and a new form composed chiefly by Frederick William himself was imposed on the people, with altars, candlesticks, and other practices that were considered Popish by the Lutheran Church, and were utterly repugnant to Calvinistic principles and feelings.<sup>4</sup>

While there were many advanced thinkers in Germany who

1 Treitschke, ii. 240.

2 Wisconsin Historical Collections, xiv. 344.

3 ibid.

4 Laing, Observations of a Traveller on the Condition of Europe 1848 and 1849, p. 431.



warmly supported the union, the mass of the people in certain sections was violently opposed to it. Especially was this true in Silesia, where practically the entire population was Lutheran, and where the union was felt to be at least unnecessary.<sup>1</sup> Many of the clergy there refused to adopt the new liturgy, still adhering to their old forms of worship; as a consequence, they were imprisoned or banished. Many of the people refused to send their children to the Evangelical schools, or to accept the services of the new pastors for marriage, baptism, or burial, or to pay taxes to support the new church; such were fined or imprisoned, and dragoons were quartered on their villages.<sup>2</sup> The persecution was, according to a contemporary, the most revolting aggression on the freedom of religion since the Reformation, and one worthy of the days of Louis XIV.<sup>3</sup>

This action on the part of Prussia was imitated in Baden, Hesse, and in fact all Protestant Germany except Hanover. The government of Baden declared that the Calvinistic Church, in its simplicity of worship and in the principle of its church government, was too democratic to be tolerated in monarchical governments.<sup>4</sup>

When Frederick William IV came to the throne in 1840, he was not prepared to go to such lengths as had his father in religious matters, but nevertheless the union was not repealed,

1 Wisconsin Historical Collections, xiv. 345.

2 Laing, 433.

3 ibid., 430.

4 ibid.



and the people chafed under the legal restrictions, even though these were not enforced.<sup>1</sup> The king was, on the whole, tolerant towards all whose faith was based on dogma, but there was at this time a freer tendency among German thinkers, and though these men were tolerated at first, these were in the long run not allowed to remain in the Protestant National Church, but were compelled to withdraw and set up "Free Congregations".<sup>2</sup>

Some carried such ideas farther still, and freethinking became prevalent, thus stirring up the religious world. In the early part of the century Schelling had taught that individuals are merely instruments for carrying out the designs of Providence; they are entirely dependent on the Absolute.<sup>3</sup> Hegel had declared that the Idea reigns supreme. "Thinking", he said, "goes on within us but is not controlled by us, and thought is the one thing that includes all others and makes of the universe a unity".<sup>4</sup> The teaching of these two men increased philosophical speculation, but the religious element was shocked by the fatalistic tendencies of one and the atheism of the other, and a war was brought on by them between the conservatives and radicals in religious matters.

It was, however, the iconoclastic writers of the Tübingen school, Bauer, Vischer, Strauss, and others, who created the most excitement in Europe by their declaration that the Gospels are unhistorical and the Epistles uninspired.<sup>5</sup> In order to counteract

1 Littell's Living Age, XXXV, 40.

2 Cambridge Modern History, xi.51.

3 Cushman, ii. 311.

4 ibid., 322.

5 Andrews, Development of Modern Europe, i. 270.



the influence of these startling announcements, Bishop Arnoldi of Treves tried , in 1844, to strengthen the devotion of the Catholics by the exhibition of the "Holy Coat of Treves", the pretended seamless coat of Christ.<sup>1</sup> A million and a half people made the pilgrimage to see the sacred object.<sup>2</sup> The common law prohibited all extraordinary assemblages either political or religious, but by the Concordat with the pope the state had agreed not to interfere with religious services.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly nothing was done officially to oppose the Bishop's movement, but the actions of the pilgrims on the road and the miraculous stories which the masses firmly believed concerning the power of the sacred object excited the hostile zeal of John Ronge, a priest who had been suspended for holding too liberal ideas.<sup>4</sup> He gathered around him some followers who wished to separate from Rome, and started a German Catholic Church. This was to express their national sympathies and yet not force them to accept the Protestant religion. At the same time John Czerski, a suspended vicar of the Prussian-Polish town Schneidemühl, had organized a "Christian-Apostolic" congregation of those who would not tolerate the celibacy of the clergy.<sup>4</sup> These two disaffected Catholic sections united to form the German Catholic Church, but this organization

1 Hagenbach's Hist. of the Church in the 18th & 19th centuries, p. 450.

2 Laing, p. 402.

3 Hagenbach, p. 450.

4. ibid.



formed in 1844,<sup>1</sup> did not at once gain recognition; it was not tolerated officially in some states until 1848, and in others never. The importance of the movement was overemphasized at the time, for it soon became too weak to exist of itself and so in 1850 joined the dissatisfied Protestants of the "Free Congregations" or "Friends of Light", as they were called.<sup>2</sup> These, however, were never tolerated in most of the states but were persecuted as political organizations,<sup>3</sup> and on this account many left Germany for America and settled chiefly in Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup>

Although all of this religious agitation started before 1848, it paved the way for the revolt of that time. Religious discussion gradually changed to political unrest. A contemporary says, "The forced amalgamation of the Lutheran and Calvinistic churches by the late King of Prussia into one new church with a new liturgy and new form of his own devising, to be called the Evangelical Church; and the persecution of Lutherans and Calvinists, the imprisonment, deprivation of office, banishment, dragoon-quartering, and ruin of the people who refused to accept this new church and liturgy; was the first step in the Revolution which is now in progress in Germany".<sup>5</sup>

Even where the ruler did not attempt to establish a new church, the Roman Catholic or Protestant religion was part of the state, and the clergy formed an essential part of the bureaucratic

1 Laing, p. 402

2 Cambridge Modern History, xi. 51.

3 Littell's Living Age, xxxv. 40.

4 Wisconsin Hist. Collections, xiv. 345.

5 Laing, 430.



organization of the government.<sup>1</sup>

In this way religious questions were mixed with political; and unsatisfactory religious conditions, while a primary motive with a few Germans, were an additional incentive with others, for flight to America, where could be found freedom of worship as well as political freedom.

<sup>1</sup> Marx, Revolution and Counterrevolution, 36



### CHAPTER III.

#### POLITICAL CAUSES.

The Metternich policy; the Revolution of 1848 and its failure; the reaction.

Until 1866 we cannot speak correctly of Germany except as a geographical expression. for the German nation had ceased to exist. The old Holy Roman Empire had been destroyed in 1806 when the emperor was forced by Napoleon to abdicate. The conqueror then formed the Confederation of the Rhine which included almost all of the empire except Prussia and Austria; but with the downfall of its creator this, too, went to pieces in 1813, and the question of the reconstruction of Germany was one which was brought before the Congress of Vienna. This body finally decided upon a loose confederation of sovereign states as the only solution possible, the difficulty in the way of forming a stronger union being that Prussia and Austria were too nearly equal in strength for either to permit the other to become the leader in a powerful German nation.

As a matter of fact, however, down to 1848 not only the German states but the greater part of Europe were dominated by Austria through her great statesman, Metternich. The policy of this man was one of stern repression for everything connected with the French Revolution, which he declared was the "disease which must be cured, the volcano which must be extinguished, the gangrene which must be burned out with the hot iron, the hydra with



jaws open to swallow up the social order".<sup>1</sup> Under this, which may be called the Metternich system, a strict censorship of the press was established, the universities were placed under close supervision, and all possible safeguards were erected against democratic ideas. Nevertheless the motto of the French Revolution, "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality", had gained a foothold amongst the people, and even this great statesman was unable to eradicate it entirely. Likewise the spirit of German nationality had been aroused to expel the conqueror from their soil, and now instead of being rewarded by the formation of a strong national government, the people were forced to accept a loose union, with the monarchs reigning supreme in their several states.

In 1830 the people made an attempt over much of Europe to overthrow this Metternich system of repression and gain their liberties, but the revolt was for the most part a failure, and in Germany especially, the oppression became more severe than before. The hopes of the people of Prussia were again raised by the accession in 1840 of Frederick William IV, who had previous to this time shown liberal tendencies and who, it was believed, would redeem the promise of a constitution which had been made by the old king in 1815. Again, however, the Prussian people were doomed to disappointment, for the new ruler was no more willing to share his power than his predecessor had been. Once more, nevertheless, it seemed that their ambition to become a constitutional monarchy

1 Metternich's Memoirs, iii. 468



was about to be realized, for on February 3, 1847, the king summoned the Provincial Estates to meet in pleno as the States-General for Prussia,<sup>1</sup> and it was felt that surely this would become a constituent assembly. What, then, was their bitter disappointment when they met on April 11, 1847, in Berlin, to have the king declare that he would never allow a written constitution to come between the Lord God in Heaven and that land?<sup>2</sup> Consequently the Lower House refused his request for the sanction of a loan for the construction of more railways, and so he dissolved them with nothing accomplished.<sup>3</sup>

The revolt of 1848, however, appeared first in southern Germany rather than in Prussia. This was natural, for the former section had been more affected than Prussia by the ideas of the French Revolution, and it was administered worse. In Bavaria for instance, a dancer, Lola Montez, had gained the ascendancy over Louis I, and to please her, ministers were dismissed and the University of Munich closed.<sup>4</sup> The news of the revolts in Bavaria and Baden, and more especially the overthrow of the monarchy in France and the flight of Metternich from Vienna, encouraged the people of Prussia to rebel likewise and demand a constitution. This the king promised on March 18, 1848.<sup>5</sup> He also agreed to put himself at the head of the national movement and to sink Prussia in Germany.

1 Perris, Germany and the German Emperor, 168.

2 Carl Schurz, Reminiscences, 107.

3 Perris, 169. Henderson, ii, 343.

4 Henderson, ii, 345.

5 Perris, 169.



The body on which centered the hopes of the people for a united Germany was the Frankfort parliament. On February 27, 1848, fifty-one prominent men had met at Heidelberg to consult on the needs of the hour.<sup>1</sup> These had appointed a committee or ante-parliament which in turn called for a national parliament to be elected by universal suffrage.<sup>2</sup> This assembly met on May 18, 1848, and by this time it seemed that the revolutionists would be able to force the monarchs to accept the reforms they proposed. There were at least three parties represented in the convention, the conservatives who wished for the old Bundesrath with modifications, restricted representation, liberty of the press under governmental supervision, and the right to assemble for peaceable purposes by special permission; the moderate liberal party which desired a constitutional monarchy with an emperor elected by the parliament, a responsible ministry, an unrestricted press, and a reduction of the armies; and the radicals who stood for the abdication of all sovereigns and the abolition of all armies.<sup>3</sup> This body had a good chance to form a successful constitution, but instead of taking advantage of the opportunity to establish a union while the control was yet in the hands of the revolutionists, they put in their time debating the rights of man, feeling, as had the members of the French Constituent Assembly in 1789, that these must be declared before a form of government could be instituted. It was, perhaps, this order of procedure more than anything else that

1 Browning, 318.

2 Henderson, ii, 743.

3 Becker, 19-20.



caused the failure of the Revolution of 1848. By the time the constitution had been drawn up the rulers were once more gaining control, and when the convention offered the crown of Germany to Frederick William IV of Prussia, he refused, although he had agreed to put himself at the head of the German movement. The crown, however, he would receive only from the sovereigns themselves, for he was a firm believer in the divine right of kings and was convinced that a parliament could not bestow the crown of the empire. Of course the other monarchs could not be brought to agree to give up their power to the King of Prussia, and so the movement failed.

The sovereigns had once more gained control, and now came a time of stern repression. The Diet repealed the fundamental rights voted by the parliament in 1849,<sup>1</sup> and the states started to restore the Vormürzische Zustände. As a consequence the courts had all the work they could do, the prisons were filled, and executions became numerous, made only too often in defiance of even the semblance of law and justice and of common loyalty to given promises. Under such conditions it is not surprising that the emigration to America increased rapidly.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the insurgents in Württemberg had retreated through the Black Forest to Switzerland. Here they were disarmed by the Swiss, but for a time they were at least safe. The leaders, however, could not return to their fatherland, and owing to the pressure of the German governments they were finally ordered to

1 Richard, 472.

2 See diagram p. 5.



leave Switzerland.<sup>1</sup> The leaders who were not fortunate enough to escape were tried by court martial and imprisoned or shot.<sup>2</sup> In 1851 the states concluded treaties for the expulsion of political suspects,<sup>3</sup> and in consequence many leaders, especially from among those who were Socialists, were exiled. Among the latter were Karl Marx, who was not allowed to stop in Paris but finally found refuge in London,<sup>4</sup> Frederick Engels, who had taken part in the Elberfeld rising of 1849 and was now ordered to leave Prussian territory,<sup>5</sup> and William Weitling, who was expelled from Germany and later from Switzerland on the grounds of communistic agitation.<sup>6</sup> Jury trials were suppressed in those states in which they had been instituted, and special courts were set up to try political cases, while in some parts government agents were hired to instigate political offences and then to denounce them.<sup>7</sup>

The censorship of the press was restored, and press prosecutions became numerous, for the Revolution was only outwardly suppressed, as is shown by the energy of political interest in Droysen, Mommsen, Von Sybel, and Treitschke, whose works were in large part written to glorify Prussia and the German nationality. This awakening of political life was largely due to the fact that

1 Becker, 13.

2 ibid., 14.

3 Publicationen aus den König Preussischen Staats Archiven, xii, 108

4 Marx, ix.

5 Dawson, 53.

6 ibid., 44.

7 Seignobos, 398.



while the Revolutionists were in control, the working classes had been admitted to a share in parliamentary affairs and so had developed an interest in them.

It was felt that the theories, social, religious, and anti-religious, which filled the minds of the lower orders, emanated from the schools and universities, and so these were again put under close supervision.<sup>1</sup> In 1849 at a conference of teachers in Prussian training colleges, Frederick William IV had said, "You, and you alone, are to blame for all the misery which the last year has brought upon Prussia. The pseudo-education of the masses is to blame for it. You have been spreading it under the name of true wisdom. This sham education, strutting about like a peacock, has always been hateful to me; I hated it from the bottom of my soul before I came to the throne, and since I became king I have done all that I could to suppress it".<sup>2</sup>

Not content with thus attacking what he considers to be the source of the trouble, the king next tried to eradicate these ideas from the lower classes, and on April 14, 1853, a proposal was introduced into the German Diet for repressing workingmen's associations.<sup>3</sup> This was not passed immediately by the Diet, but a number of the separate states took up the matter. That action, however, was not deemed sufficient, and on July 13, 1854, a motion was passed that in the interests of common safety all the federated governments should further undertake to dissolve within two months

1 Littell's Living Age, xvii. 530.

2 Haldine, 419.

3 Publicationen aus den König Preussischen Staatsarchiven, xv. 109.



all the working men's associations and fraternities, then existing in their territories, which are pursuing political, socialistic, or communistic purposes, and to forbid the resuscitation of such organizations under heavy penalty.<sup>1</sup> Naturally under cover of this ordinance many men were hunted down, persecuted, and compelled to leave the country in haste, while many who had taken a prominent part in the revolutions and had lived far escaped were now forced to go into exile. Not one from South America as being the country in which they could find the political freedom which they so much desired. Domiciliary visits were instituted to help in the matter, and suspects were kept under close surveillance. To be a suspect did not used to have raised in the uprising, for all those who did not do the government desired were so regarded.<sup>2</sup> Official grants were used both in voters and in the Chambers, and in the latter still remained unyielding, "They shall dissolve", and the sovereign either ruled with a铁 rod or was compelled to quit himself.

This espionage was also maintained over men's occupations and professions. One lawyer and writer said, "No other lawyer would give a report; no business man had the courage to seek the aid of his legal knowledge; no editor would consent to publish a word of mine".<sup>3</sup> He finally succeeded in winning out these words, but the government broke them aside and

<sup>1</sup> Publication aus den Königlich Preussischen Staatsarchiven, VII. 172  
<sup>2</sup> Siegloos, 398.  
<sup>3</sup> Hazen, ... .



their introduction into public libraries. Physicians were denied certificates to practice because their "morality" could not be guaranteed, inasmuch as they were Democrats. News, etc., might be published, but they could not be sold, for any news-dealer who would offer them for sale was liable to arrest. Under the Berlin police regulation of 1871 a prisoner could be forced to confess by the use of torture, entire deprivation of sleep for any length of time, use of the strait jacket, and corporal punishment to thirty strokes.<sup>1</sup> In this way one could be made to incriminate himself, and then could be driven from the country. Furthermore there were few places in which he could take refuge, for although personal liberty was allowed in some countries, the rule of Prussia soon became disturbed by the sense of impending conflict which culminated in the Crimean War of 1854 to 1856.

It is no wonder that most of German intelligence and learning turned toward America. Especially was this true of Russia, where the revolution had been most bloody. There is now only one and he has left behind a great library of history. The attitude of the oligarchy toward political prisoners is illustrated by the half-humorous words of Gor'kiy who said, "If you have been the victim of injustice, and have been sent westward in Germany, if either in prison, or else, if imprisoned, as I was overruled by my little husband I must go to America."<sup>2</sup>

1 Hazen, 242.

2 Richard, 472.



## CHAPTER IV.

### ECONOMIC CAUSES.

Overpopulation; famine, prices, and migration; feudal tenure and Stein-Turckenberg reforms; emigration and rainfall; industrial revolution; waves; commercial crisis.

In addition to religious, ecclesiastical, and political opposition, many of the German emigrants were leaving behind them distress and want. In fact it is probable that nine-tenths of those that left took their bread with them when they left home, for, as one author says, said men, Germans will give up the last morsel before they give up their political ideals. And he quotes another that an average man in south-western Germany, where land could be divided, owned about one acre of land, which caused emigration.<sup>1</sup>

The country has suffered overpopulation; it is the consequence of peasant proprietorship and a system of agriculture that gives no room of subsistence, and is the consequence of this the average income less than £1000, if the industrial pursuits are overburdened, so that the competition is acute among, and sufficient reward is no longer offered, and each emigrant who goes into this field further increases the evil; and if the areas of land are too limited to support the population under the old system of cultivation.<sup>2</sup> This condition was prevalent Germany

1. Moseley, "Die Übersessische Auswanderung," 26.

2. Macmillan, "Russia and Austria," 562-770.



about the middle of the nineteenth century. The country was still very much agricultural, and in 1815 the peasant army in this pursuit had been enlarged by releasing them from their military duty. The next year 17,000 men followed, during which time the population had increased rapidly. The civil birth rate was 30.9 at Baden in 1798 and Württemberg passed a law limiting the population to four as a half the sum to the square mile; although it was never enforced, it influenced industrial areas of density twice as high as the standard.<sup>1</sup> The state of the peasant is described as a wretched hut, which seems a palace if the family possesses a single table, chair, and miserable bed. Often one pot is the only kitchen utensil. To one less more than a few acres and that a rough one; the children run about even in winter least naked, and can never wear shoes and stockings on their feet. Potatoes are the chief article of food, meat never appearing on the table, and bread scarcely ever except on feast days. The potato harvest marks a new epoch in the household economy and the existence of the poor depends on it.<sup>2</sup>

Württemberg, in order to overcome the evil of successive population, required that a man should prove that he has sufficient means to support a family before he could marry.<sup>3</sup> The blood-letting of the forties, it seems, was not sufficient to

1. Akten des Landtages von Jahre 1848, 267-307.

2. Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-ökonomik, iii. 377.

3. Ibid. 372

4. Monckmeier, L.



re, took the right in the battle of population and the means of subsistence, and so the movement of the migrants became even stronger between 1850 and 1854 than during the two years previous.

In the south, land was divided equally among the heirs,<sup>1</sup> so that there was a rapid increase of population, the size of the holdings tended to become so small that peasants could gain only a bare existence. In normal years they raised a few potatoes, and a little corn, oats, clover, and hay. Even the well-to-do farmers depended almost exclusively on milk, potatoes, and corn-bread.<sup>2</sup>

If this was the condition in normal years, it is hard to imagine how peasants existed during the times of famine which now occurred. Beginning with 1844 there were successive harvests below the average; the winter of 1844 and 1845 was so severe that many vineyards were destroyed in southern Germany, and this destruction considerably lessened the income from wine, the chief product of that section. Then the potato rot, which caused the famine in Ireland in 1846, appeared in southwestern Germany the next year, thus destroying the principal means of subsistence and causing large numbers to emigrate to America. In 1849 the crops were slightly better, but beginning with 1850 conditions became worse than ever.<sup>3</sup> Not only were potatoes a

1 Pooley, Settlement of Illinois, 494.

2 Schriften des Vereins für Social-Politik, Lii. 130.

3 Pooley, 494.

4 Monckmeier, 51.



failure, but from 1850 to 1853 there was in Württemberg a complete failure of the vintage<sup>1</sup> and also of rye, the latter causing a rise in the price of bread, for rye was the chief breadstuff of the lower classes.<sup>2</sup> Pauperization increased so rapidly in Baden that the state had to come to the aid of the people, and in 1850 it appropriated 7,000 florins for seed-corn and wheat, the peasants not having means of their own to plant them.<sup>3</sup>

In general it may be said, that a rise in the number of emigrants follows a depression in economic conditions on the European side of the Atlantic and prosperity on the American side, and a rise in prices in Europe is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the volume of emigration. The price of rye has been called the barometer of emigration in Bavaria.<sup>4</sup> A study of the tables of the emigration from Prussia, Hesse, and Bavaria, and of the prices of rye in those states for the years 1847 to 1855 shows that in all except three cases, when the price rose the emigration increased. These three exceptions are, that in Hesse from 1850 to 1853 the price of rye fell, but emigration increased, and in Bavaria in 1850 the price of rye rose slightly while emigration remained stationary, and in 1855 the price of rye fell a little while the emigration increased slightly. So it would appear that though other causes entered in to influence the volume of emigration, its changes corresponded in general to changes in

1 Feest, i. 210.

2 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, Iii. vii.

3 Ibid. 134.

4 Ibid. 20.

5 See page 5.



PUNJABI

Years	% of population engaged	Price of rye per 100 kg. expressed in rupees
1847-'49	3.25	129 2/3
1850-'52	3.45	121 1/3
1853-'55	4.42	202 1/3

URDU

Years	% of population engaged	Price of rye per 100 kg. expressed in rupees
1847-'49	.75	19.12
1850-'52	1.	19.55
1853-'55	1.6	35.65

BENGALI

Year	% of population engaged	Price of rice per 100 kg. expressed in florins
1848	2.1	10.1-
1849	1.5	7.-
1850	1.9	7.37
1851	2.6	12.88
1852	1.4	17.12
1853	2.5	17.37
1854	5.1	5.-
1855	2.1	31.12

1 Nom. of, Studiorum 2000 Rur'lior'is beweging, 1855

2 Tandis et tiliik da 'Cresh rzoqj, Housiu, Ioni, II

3 Schriften der 'Mahratja Sir Coci 1-P' Iuli, III. 1-1.



the price of rye.

The distress of the peasantry during those years of famine and consequent high prices was aggravated by the redemption laws which were intended to benefit them. A change in the economic world, although it may in the end be beneficial, usually entails war or languor until it is in progress. Especially in the traditional institutions to which the people have been accustomed for long centuries are changes slow. Such a case was the feudal system. This had grown up in the Middle Ages and had become so deeply rooted that it was not completely destroyed on its economic and political sides until late in the nineteenth century, although England had done away with it years before, and the last vestiges of it in France had been given up on the night of August the Fourth, 1789. It had been completely destroyed on the left bank of the Rhine when that territory had been added to France in the Napoleonic era, but in the agricultural districts of the old it still flourishes. It is true that although it is one of the icons of the French Revolution a decree had been issued in 1810 providing for the redemption of seigniorial rights and dues,<sup>1</sup> but after the restoration of the old order in 1816 this had been so modified by a new decree that day by the nobility became worse off than before. Under this new law all persons to whom holdings were sufficient to support a household, and whose possession was ancient and confirmed for long years in the peasant roll, could retain

<sup>1</sup> Seignior, etc.



their dues and service to their overlord by making an equivalent money payment, and returning one-third of their holdings to him if he chose hereditarily or one-half if they were not. No in the sections where the hereditary holdings could be divided among the heirs, the majority of them had become too small entirely to support a family and so could not be redeemed. Likewise now in all sections could not prove their title by the assessment roll, and so they too were deprived from the benefit of this provision, and gained only their personal freedom which was a rather doubtful advantage in view of what they lost.<sup>1</sup> They did not become proprietors, but if they stayed on the land they remained under the control of the nobles to whom the land belonged. These usually let the peasant have the small plot which he had been accustomed to work, and in return he worked on the lord's land as of old. In this respect the peasants were neither better nor worse off than before, but whereas they could now leave the land if they so desired, so on the other hand the landlord could dismiss them of it at any time he pleased.<sup>2</sup> In fact they held it much like rented land except that the payments were made in labor rather than in cash. They likewise lost the indefinite but substantial rights of pasture and the use of the waste land and the forest.

Furthermore, now that the nobles and landlords saw their power threatened by this loosening of the old bonds, they sought to increase their influence by adding to their possessions.<sup>3</sup>

1 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, Lii. 114.

2 Soi polos, 15

3 Nonckneitz, 39



They compensated themselves for the loss of their stocks by buying new land, and it so happened that just at this time waste land so well as some peasant holdings were for sale cheap to those who had the capital to invest.<sup>1</sup> This in time made the rent of corn-land increase, and in consequence the price of corn advanced rapidly.<sup>2</sup> There resulted a double loss to the peasant, for he had lost his right to the pasture land, and the price of fodder went up so that he could not afford to keep a cow. Without the milk to help feed his family, he was unable to make a living, and was in such need that he was forced to sell his land to the nobles and either become a day-laborer or emigrate. This movement was so strong that in Hesse between 1846 and 1854 the number of peasants was reduced by emigration more than seven percent. In some cases whole villages disappeared. For example in 1855 it was said that the village of Wernings had entirely vanished in the last eight or ten years. The peasants had sold their land to the Count of Solms-Laubach and emigrated. The same thing was true of Pferdsbach and Wippenbach in Hesse. This movement was strong also in north and east Germany, where the peasant holdings of whole villages were absorbed by the great estates, and in consequence the statistics show a decided decrease of peasant proprietors. It is stated that in the eastern provinces of Prussia the decrease was from 277,704

1 Monckmeyer, 41.

2 ibid. 59

3 ibid.

4 ibid. 40



peasant owners is 1:16 to 16,111 in 1859.<sup>1</sup> In Germany the decrease in the amount of land so held was 13.18% and in Schleswig 12.8%.

Dr. Eduard Brückner, professor of geography at Vienna, has made an interesting study of "Climatic Variations and Emigration in the Nineteenth Century".<sup>2</sup> He says, "The harvest of a land depends on the rainfall, but wet and dry seasons do not have the same effect in all places. Especially can we observe a difference in the influence of the amount of rainfall between western and middle Europe on the one side and the United States on the other". A wet season, he claims, causes poor crops in Europe, while in America it produces good ones, but a dry season is favorable to production in Europe and adverse here. Consequently when there is a season wetter than normal, North America will receive many emigrants from the old countries, and in dry seasons the number will decrease. In the tables on the following page which were compiled by Dr. Brückner the rainfall is given not absolutely but in percentages above or below the average. Thus for the year 1855 the rainfall of Europe is 0% or normal while that of the United States is 1 or 1% above normal. The correspondence of migration and rainfall is clearly shown by the parallelism of the two curves.<sup>3</sup> This theory can be applied to that of the price of rye and emigration, for surely rainfall

1 Monatssehr., 10.

2 Internationale Zeitschrift für Gesellschaft, Kunst und Technik, March 7, 1880.

3 See page 2.

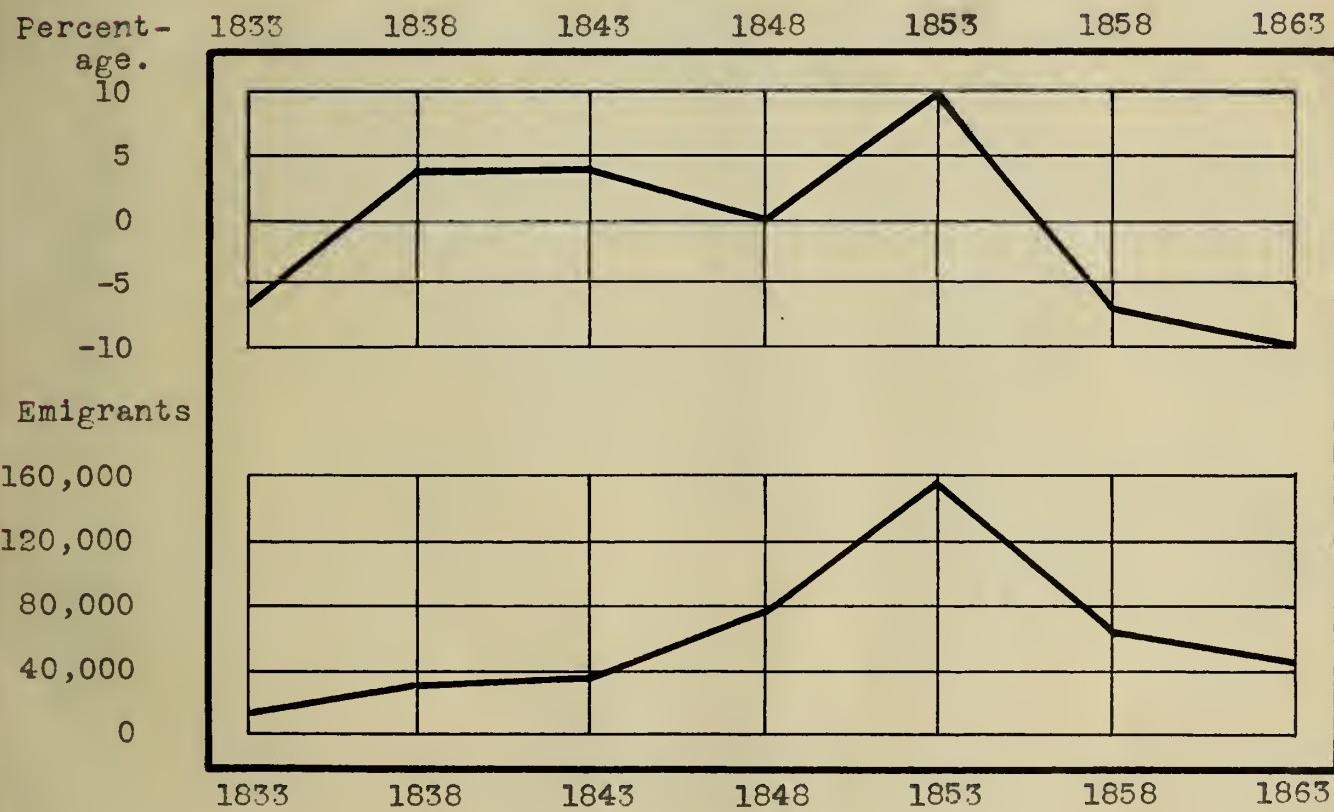
4 Ibid.



Emigration to the United States and Rainfall

Years	German emigration to the United States in 10,000 population.	Percentage of Rainfall in	
		Germany	United States
1841-1845	11	3	1
1846-1850	33	-1	8
1851-1855	65	8	1
1856-1860	27	-7	-7

Curves of Rainfall and Emigration.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For detailed curve of emigration see page 5.



in Germany is above normal, the crops are poor, and prices advance, while prices are lower than the rainfall is below normal. Thus from 1816 to 1850 the rainfall is 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> billion and the prices of rye are low, but during the next period there is an abundant rainfall, and prices in some years are nearly three times as high as in 1819 and 1850.<sup>1</sup>

While the rainfall was not favorable, while crops were poor, and while the repressive legislation oppressed the agricultural classes, there was no general economic crisis in Germany, for as the industrial revolution was progressing, with its characteristic social disorganization. The industrial revolution had its effect in constricting the fall of agricultural wages; only small and indirect changes from the domestic stage to the regulation of 10 guilds, and the first of them were not established. This is proved by the fact that in 1850 less than 10% of the population lived in towns of two thousand or over, and less than 5% in cities of fifty thousand.<sup>2</sup> Hence, secondly, Germany, by means of spinning and weaving in factories, and the like, obtained a surplus of men on all sides, who could not find work in the soil, for the fact is that the rural population is continually decreasing. This is shown in the following statistics from 1850, 1870, and 1890 according to which machine production of all kinds of articles must be kept continually complete.

In the same districts of Prussia there

1 See note 58

2 V. chart p. 60.



- 6 -

weaving had been a profitable source of income in the districts, but power spinning was gradually introduced, and the handworkers either had to rely on their work or accept wages low enough to allow their products to compete with machine-made articles.<sup>1</sup> In this way the weavers could get only eighteen shillings for a piece of work that took them five or six weeks to finish. The same thing was true of the spinning of flax in Lippe-Detmold on the Weser River, from which section came a large emigration to Wisconsin in 1849 and 1850.<sup>2</sup> This same dislocation of hand industries took place also in the Pragelinge,<sup>3</sup> as well as in the south in Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria, where the question of employment was still more acute, since industries were all at a standstill, while the farming districts were over-populated.<sup>4</sup>

The condition of the working-class was worse in Silesia than anywhere else, because it was originally located in the part of Germany where laborers received 20 shillings and 11 pence in wages in Breslau in 1840. In Berlin the highest wage paid skilled laborers was 14.70 per month. In Breslau a laborer received 81.00 a month, and did not pay 71.30 for food alone. It is not surprising in view of these statistics that large numbers should wish to come to America to better their condition.

1 Dawson, *Cor. of Soci. Amer.*, 4.

2 Wisconsin Historical Collections, niv. 566.

3 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, III. 369.

4 *Ibid.*, 130.

5 Dawson, 55.



A financial crisis in Germany in 1847 and 1848, due to the too rapid increase of the number of railroads, and a general depression prevailing over the continent, aggravated the condition of the working people. But it was during and after the last four years that the misery increased. About 15 March hundreds of thousands left Berlin. To the Duke the church should triumph, it will be insolvent; and the republicans should be victorious, it will repudiate the debts of the church. In either case much property will be confiscated, and society as well as the burgher class will be disorganized, and so rich as well as so poor find greater security and opportunity in the land across the sea.



## CHAPTER V

### SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL AID

Liberation societies; Legal freedom of emigration; Advice to emigrants; State appropriations.

Many of the lower classes, however, owing to the economic depression of the country, the failure of crops and the dereliction of hand-industries, had not the means to make a living on this side of the water; for although the cost of living had cheapened considerably, nevertheless, it cost more than those people could possibly gather together. Liberated societies were formed during the forties and fifties to aid such persons, but the money raised by these organizations was not philanthropic but patriotic. The idea originated in the New Germany in Berlin. This was to be made economically, if not politically, with the lone country, for want of the Federal States being destroyed, Germany felt the need of a market for her products such as England and France possessed in their colonial empires. There arose a flood of literature describing this scheme, and Wisconsin in the place peculiarly agreed upon in being particularly like Germany in soil and climate, and so suited suited for a German settlement. It is the plan may be ridiculous of trying to Germanize a portion of the United States, but the fact that prominent men headed the movement shows



that it was really considered seriously. Terms had been thought to be suited for German occupation, and in 1844 a society had been formed in Mainz for the protection of German emigration to that region.<sup>1</sup> It was thought that if enough settled here, it could easily become a dependency of Germany, but with its connection to the United States this plan was frustrated, and attention was turned strongly toward Wisconsin. This accounts to some extent for the large German population of those states.

This movement was strengthened by the general acceptance of the theory that had been published by Malthus at the beginning of the century. According to this population tends to increase in geometrical ratio, while the means of subsistence increase only in arithmetical ratio. This population would push beyond the means of subsistence if left to itself, and the correct ratio between the two would then be restored by starvation. Germany had had forty years of peace and comparative prosperity, in which it was certainly true that the population had increased more rapidly than the means of subsistence, hence the starving condition among the peasants. In a series of lectures this situation and restoring the correct ratio between products and people, these agricultural societies conceived the idea of sending the home surplus to North America, where population was much behind the means of subsistence owing to the country's being now and still unsettled.

Sixteen such emigrant societies were formed in Baden

<sup>1</sup> Moncktauer, 8/2.



alone,<sup>1</sup> more purpose was not so much to give direct financial aid, as to assist the emigrant in disposing of his property profitably, to give him instructions as to the journey and settlement, and by overseeing the steamship companies to give him cheap and good transportation. In 1847 the National Society for German Emigration and Colonization was organized with its center at Darmstadt, but it also maintained branches in nearly all German states.<sup>2</sup> Its purposes were to relieve the social and economic conditions of the country by aiding the surplus population to emigrate, and to help them remain German by keeping their own language and customs. In order to aid in accomplishing the latter aim it tried to engage professional men as well as laborers to go, so that the services of men of other nations would not be all needed.

In 1848 a congress of all the German emigration societies met at Frankfort, especially in order to discuss the present methods of aiding emigration, as a means of preventing the spread of poverty in the home country.<sup>3</sup> In the following year the Society for the Centralization of German Emigration and Colonization was formed in Berlin. Since 1853 this has been known as the Central Society for German Emigration and Colonization. Many of the prominent men of Berlin were influential in this organization; Von Bulow, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, was president, while Gobler, a counsellor, Von Möller, a Judge,

1 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, 181.

2 Ibid., Iii. 474.

3 Nonckheier, 481.



and the wealthy wine merchant Krause, were among the emigrants.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the most important work, however, was done on the parts from which the emigrants sailed. Bremen and Hamburg were the two principal ports of embarkation. 12,657 people sailed from Bremen during the year 1844; this number increased to 5,776 in 1850 and 76,875 in 1854.<sup>2</sup> The emigrants came from the different parts of Germany and 300 lines had to be used, several ports, for there were not sufficient ships to accommodate them all owing to the rapid increase of the number of emigrants. To care for these people a migration house was erected in Bremen in 1850. This contained lodgings, a hospital room, a laundry, and a church which could be used by both Catholics and Protestants. The charge of board in this place was extremely small so that it would cost within the reach of all.<sup>3</sup>

In the next year an information bureau for emigrants was started, on the initiative of a private organization. The purpose was to furnish "all persons who wished to go to Bremen to seek their fortune with reliable information".

For all the work, however, has left its indelible impress on the city, not so much in the result of the information of emigrants. This was the case of the 12,000 who came over the Atlantic to government lumber contracts. Finally, it has been regarded as injurious to the state, and an

1. Christian von Warden, "Die Sozial-Politik", III. 67.

2. Monatsschr., I.

3. Ibid., II.

4. Christian von Warden, "Die Sozial-Politik", III. 62.



had been virilely forbidden, the now almost forgotten "The Hawaiian Hymn" is still known to the descendants of settlers.<sup>1</sup> It was probably the result of existing economic and social conditions at that time of long ago, 1820, 1830, 1840.

The question was raised as to sending out a party to the Foreign - Franklin Dill said, and on July 3, 1843 resolution of the Bill of the Right of Man was adopted, declaring that the colored immigrants were to be allowed to live in the country, and that he would go to the selection of the emigrants. On March 16, 1844 a committee was formed to select the emigrants and their destination, and the project was adopted. This group of forty-eight signed the commission which was sent to Boston in early September. The Foreign branch immediately sent out to Boston to report on the soil, climate, and products of the different sections of the country. Fort thousand dollars was appropriated for this exploration.

This action on the part of the United States, however, was never realized, as the Revolution of 1848 failed, and the consolidation of the new State was delayed. But the results of our mission were successful. The first school was established in Honolulu. The first church was established in Honolulu. The first newspaper was established in Honolulu. The first library was established in Honolulu. The first post office was established in Honolulu. The first account-

<sup>1</sup> See, No.

<sup>2</sup> John C. Green, "Hawaii," in "Continentals," Ill. 47

<sup>3</sup> 1840,

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Dill, "Hawaii," Ill. 57.

<sup>5</sup> No. 821, 1844.



in to consider the best way in which such a movement could be conducted and certain demands, the fulfillment of which would go toward meeting just such a condition of affairs as they had in view. I could, however, see no better way of carrying this idea forward than to establish a central agency. I had obtained authority from the government to do so, and I collected in cooperation the services of our local societies, and I was soon able to get the Central Society organized and to obtain a large amount of contribution, giving to this agency the largest real resources to carry on a work in Brazil, and in return to have freed from military service all times.<sup>1</sup> To get in these local societies, if you were willing to sign the order that a German state he sent to notice of the fact published for three days to him who before he might leave. In 1869 the local society for promoting the interests of the working people in Bahia became engaged in a movement to repeal this law, but it was defeated in Bahia notwithstanding.<sup>2</sup> In 1870 in the review near the time of publication of the article of resolution was determined from three months to four years.<sup>3</sup> Bahia was subjected to this rule throughout the country. It will take a long time to do this except to go to other South American countries, and then they will not have the privilege of settling in Brazil.<sup>4</sup>

Societies aiding a fugitive in saving his loyal relatives or in the finding helped in many other ways. For instance

1. L. 1869, No.

2. Beschreibung des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, III. 1870.

3. ibid., 1871.

4. ibid., 1871.



in Prussia the law of April 9th, 1849, while it prohibited the assistance of the emigration of citizens and the conduct of trade, i.e., for the middle class who did not need help, protected those who left the country by requiring that ships should not be so overcrowded that passengers could not have sufficient air and room on deck. It also regulated the amount of food of different kinds to be taken for each passenger.<sup>1</sup> In Prussia on February 11th, 1848, a bill was passed giving further provision for the carrying of emigrants by sea to North America. Again by the law of May 7th, 1855, the state tried to protect the emigrants by providing that the contractors and agents of emigration would be under control. They also tried to extend their sphere of influence, and to protect their people on this side of the water from "runners" and "landslarks" who were ready to cheat them out of their little money they had managed to bring with them. But, but then, the lead in this government and especially in 1853 had gone to New York whose business it was to take care of the emigrants.<sup>2</sup> Württemberg in 1843 had placed officials in New York, Baltimore, and New Orleans, and by the period under consideration practically all the German states had agents in America whose chief duty it was to protect and aid their countrymen in every way possible.

Another and still more important field had been opened by the state in regard to emigration. That arose about 1841

1 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, III. 419.

2 Royal Prussian Archives, V. J. - D. 1848. Feb. 11.

3 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, III. 419.

4 Monckmeyer, 247.



such a group demand for state emigration that it took  
the appearance of a matter of life and death with the writer.  
It became so strong that it had to be resisted, and in Baden  
alone \$70, 370 florins were given to aiding the emigration.  
It remained but in the last two years of the decade, on account of  
the famine of 1847.<sup>1</sup> Financial aid was given in both Württem-  
berg and Hesse, and strongest of all, in Bavaria the people were  
given money from the state treasury to enable them to find a new  
home in America, although legally they could not go outside the  
territory of the German states.<sup>2</sup> In Prussia the state confined  
its efforts to subsidizing the Central Society for German Emi-  
gration. The capital of this organization was so small that  
without the aid of the state it could not have done its work.  
In 1850 it received six hundred marks and in the next three years  
ten times that much, so great became the pressure.

In fact without the aid that was given by the govern-  
ments the private societies could never have handled the situ-  
ation, and hundreds of those who emigrated to America would have  
been financially unable to leave their native land.

1 Monckmeyer, Jr.

2 Schriften des Vereins für Sozial-Politik, Lii.

3 ibid., 19



## CHAPTER VI

### CAUSES IN AMERICA

The opening up of the West; Discovery of gold in California; Letters and advice of earlier emigrants.

The causes of migration discussed thus far have been those existing in Germany, but there were also attractions drawing Germans to this side of the Atlantic. In fact the name "America" was almost synonymous with "fairyland" to some among the poorer classes of peasants. If there had not been strong allurement there, many Germans would not have ventured to leave their old homes at all, or if they had, rarely have sought a better position in some other European country, as France or England, in both of which lands conditions were very much superior to those in Germany, owing to the fact that the industrial revolution had made far greater strides.

In the first place this was a period of exceptional prosperity in America. Some speak of it as the "Golden Age".<sup>1</sup> This progress was due to several causes, but perhaps the one which most influenced the German emigrant was the opening of the West. Imprinted in the Germans is the desire to own land. Having had been forced to sell their holdings at home because they were no longer able to make a living, and by failing this lost the half-cut-off ties that bound them to their fatherland.

1 Bogart, Economic History of the United States, 179.



Then, therefore, they heard that land could be acquired easily in America, they were moved to seek here a habitation which they could hand down to their children. While land in America took 7 or 8 years from its acquisition before it was ripe, the introduction of it had been an error, because of the difficulty in marketing it and the impossibility of getting good produce, but all these obstacles were being surmounted by the extension of railroads. About 1850 "says Clegg, id: "Twelve years since the cost of a barrel of flour from Chicago, Illinois (by land and rail to New York City), fifteen hundred miles, was \$74.50. It is now \$17.....Twelve years since the cost of transporting a bushel of wheat from Chicago to New York was so great as effectively to keep the grain of that country out of the market. Ten bushels of wheat is transported the same distance, fifteen hundred miles, for twenty-seven cents. A barrel of flour is \$1.75 shipped from Chicago to New York for city cost".<sup>1</sup> With the addition from the coast to the interior of cheap land it could be sold so easily, it is no wonder that our valley is filled with opportunity. Wisconsin officially liberalized trade to the outside, the Legislature of 1851, and the State Board of Education, in their report, inquired as to the existing conditions and the well was most easily the answer to the question. The official migration statistics, 1850, make available about one million people, in the United States at that time. This is a large percentage of the total number of emigrants, for the average

<sup>1</sup> Bagot, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Wisconsin Historical Commission, May, 1876.



population and its resources. Partly from, the Government's failure to provide for settling in this way than the other difficulties, which were greater and chief in the cities.

But gold was less easily acquired, but there were better means of securing it here than in Germany where all articles still provided. By 1848 the threeline, including the small town, and the gradual enlargement of the camp, had reached the last stage in 1850.<sup>1</sup> The necessities of life were easily supplied; while cattle often took care of themselves by foraging.<sup>2</sup>

While those advantages attracted the more sober and industrious portion of our early German settlers, the adventurous spirits were lured by wonderous tales of the rich gold fields of California. In January 1848, gold was first discovered by James Marshall at Sutter's Mill.<sup>3</sup> This was said to be the first and best find, but others soon followed across the line. Discovery came to Oregon in 1849, and from all quarters poured a flood of fortune-hunters to the land of gold.<sup>4</sup> Not only the gold, but also the great bulk of mineral rights, belonged to the Spanish who had tried to win to their recognition in his dominions the claim of the Indian tribes which should be respected. All of the land west of the Sacramento and the Joaquin rivers was public property, and the first man who came had the first claim. When no place was established, the first claimant would own the country. To the west of California the supply of gold

1 Report, 1850.

2 Ibid., 1850.

3 Ibid., 1851.

4 See --, 1850.

5 Ibid., 1851.



and inevitable, and could hope to find it before long, so make a lucky strike, we are a party of fools now, that make themselves. The steamship companies, however, failed to secure this news of the winter; and it was not until, I guess in the gloomy term that made us more inclined to come.

I find the people sent back from this country as a whole are, perhaps, one of the chief reasons why they finally decided to try their fortune here. This was inundated with a flood of pamphlets which described the wonderful land of our advice to emigrants. The condition of the country is general described, with an account of the climate, the soil, the trees & the plants, and animals, & the characteristics of the people.<sup>1</sup> Some pamphlets then entered into a description of the various sections of the United States, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of each and comparing them with different parts of Germany.<sup>2</sup> From these the emigrants were frequently led to believe that they would find lands similar in some respects to those they had left, but were satisfied that this could easily give comfortable living. These pamphlets also gave advice as to the port of embarkation, the best season for the journey, the ports of destination, the routes to be followed to the interior, and other matters which would relieve the fears of the timid and furnish them with directions as to their course of action. One author of this time says that a great many books

1 Menzel, *Die Vereinigten Staaten.*

Kirsten, *Wissen über den Vereinigten Staaten.*

2 Ross, *Neue Amerika.*



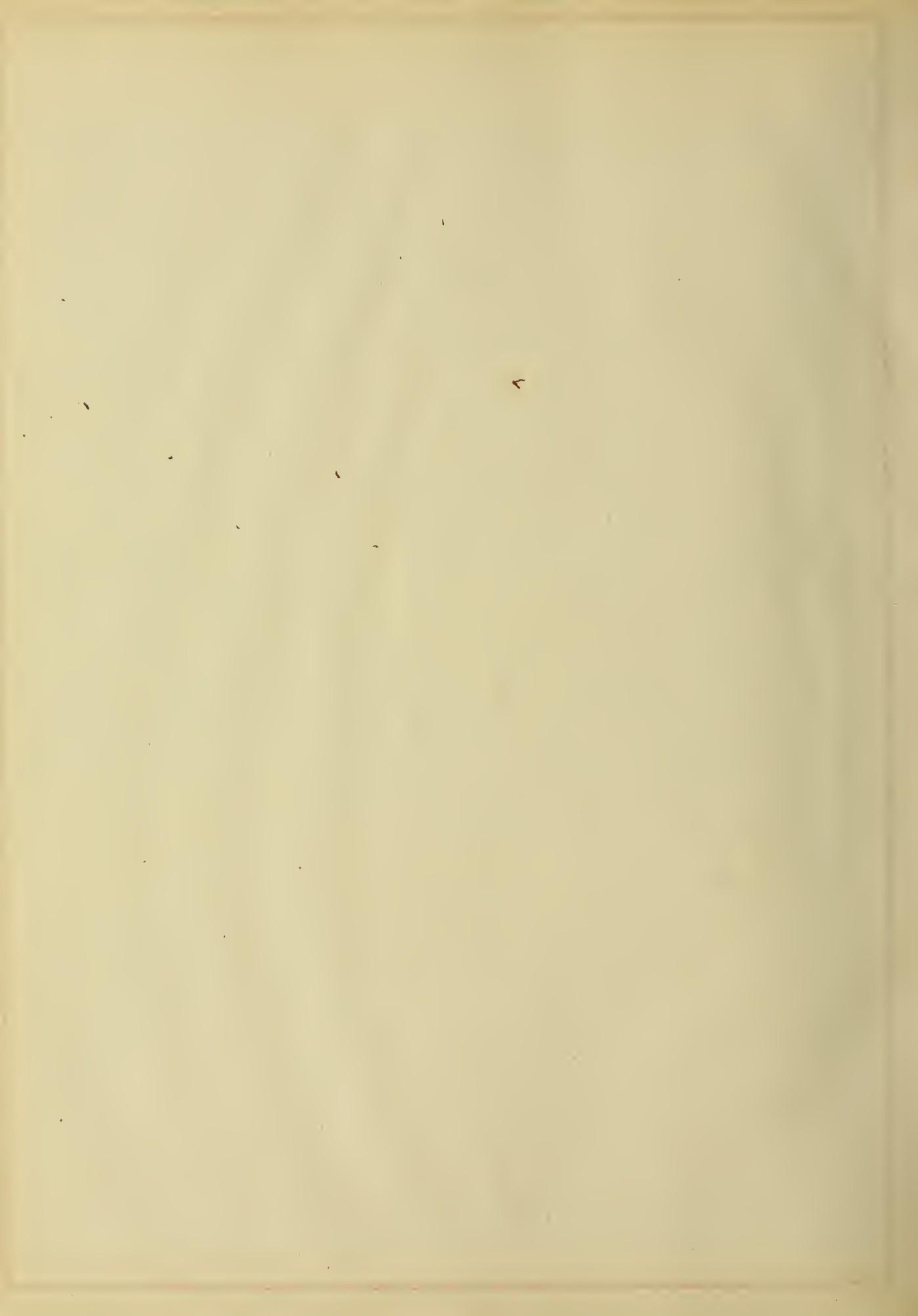
were written each year concerning America to the Jews. A book which advised the people to emigrate could have few readers and few buyers, but as soon as it was appeared that America had the land as a paradise, it was industriously bought and read, and thousands were persuaded by means of it to emigrate. So exaggerated were these reports that they seem almost like fairy-stories, in the credulity with which the people accepted them as a reality.

It may be asked why migrants already here did not advise their friends at home that these reports were too highly colored. Chiefly because in all probability they had believed the stories before they came, and perhaps had boasted to a greater or less extent of the fortune which they intended to amass in the New World. Human nature is so constituted that one has to acknowledge that he has made a mistake, for fear he will be ridiculed. So these poor emigrants were afraid of the laughter of their neighbors, if they should write back to the ancestral village that they must work for what they received here as well as at home; that while they could live better than in the Old Country, they had by no means heaped up a vast fortune at all; and that the prospects of their ever finding so seemed very slight indeed. They preferred rather to let their friends think that they had acquired from a fortune, as did two brothers who went to Texas. These soon wrote back to their father that they had been extremely fortunate, in possession of a large tract of



land of which they told well, part no longer old or which very cheap. Needles to say that from a copy contained in the volume of 1870 bringing with them money to be used in partial payment for the land, the brothers had disappeared, and no one in that section had any knowledge of their having received such a sum or having been made partners.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately such great frauds as this were rare, but still it was necessary to guard in some way against the tricks which might be played upon new arrivals, and so German emigration societies were formed here as well as in Germany. These were organized especially in New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, and many of the pamphlets of advice urged the people to go to the headquarters of these societies rather than to accept the services of any who might offer them. The adventurous naturally did not care for this protection, but among the timid some were probably encouraged to carry the knowledge that there were persons here who would give them advice on which they could rely.

1 Mitchell's *Minneapolis, Minn.* 1860



## CHAPTER VII

### CAUSES OF DECLINE IN 1875

Improvement of conditions in Germany; De-  
pression in the United States; Slavery agita-  
tion; Know-Nothing Party.

The motives which impelled the Germans to begin the  
war in the spring of 1870 consider the loss of their strength in  
whole or in part in 1865, for it was then the weaker of the two  
empires arriving at our shores was only about one-third of what  
it was in the preceding year.<sup>1</sup> An examination of the causes  
of the decline will show something of the strength of the motives  
operative during the preceding years, and those causes are to be  
found on both sides of the Atlantic.

In Germany there was a general improvement in eco-  
nomic and business conditions. In the first place there was a  
good harvest in 1854<sup>2</sup>, the first normal one for number of years.  
This harvest had before this time aggravated the political and mili-  
tary grievances of the people, so that sufficient food  
helped them to more easily sustain the severely tried front.

Naturally there was a great increase in prices after 1850,  
and the country could not stand a too small level. This  
was aggravated by the following fact that the return of gold  
from California had a like effect. This was probably the  
second cause of the decline, for while the fall of the Virginia  
gold of 1850 was not so great, yet the fall of 1854 was

<sup>1</sup> See p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning the year of rebellion in, 1850.



the people of Russia, & in the case of the nobles, reduce the prestige which they still now maintain themselves. But the upper classes, & also the middle classes, rising in 1861, had also nothing to improve in 1860, except the aristocracy who took up the task of improving the middle class of Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The condition of the laboring classes in the cities is little improved. The industrial revolution has progressed at a rapid rate, & a distinct development in technique and methods of work, & labor goes on now more rapidly. However, however, it is to be remembered, that this is not an unbroken line of progress.

The last year of the century was a dark one politically. In the Crimean War, the French, Prussians, English, and Russians became engaged in battle. The German states were drawn into the war by Prussia. France, England, and the United States, were drawn into the war by their neighbors. The Belgians, the French, & the Germans likewise, because many who had been engaged in this pursuit in other countries were released from military duty. This last year of the century, was also a year of change, & of many social & material improvements.

The condition of labor is more difficult. Workers, & their families are less and less numerous, the middle class is becoming smaller and smaller, & the working class is growing larger.

<sup>1</sup> See page 22, .  
<sup>2</sup> See page 23, .



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it became a question it should enter the union with or without slavery as its constitution might provide. This in fact annulled the Compromises of 1850 and 1850 and reopened the question of the extension of slavery, so that it appeared to me that the question could be settled only by an appeal to arms.

The next division at this time was political party, the Know-Nothing, which took effect in the decline of the Union in 1856. This was really the first appearance of the North and Massachusetts about the middle of the century. Turned to the flood of emigration into New England before 1850, some men formed a mysterious secret organization. Though most of those were descendants of the Puritans, they claimed that the aim of the Pilgrim Fathers had been not freedom of conscience, but a democratic state in close connection with the British Monarch; that the new foreigners, mostly from poor Catholics, were trying to dispossess the old and established to popularize the government. A glance at the political book of the party in 1856 will show the anti-foreign feature.

"3. America's right to the Union, and to all the rights and immunities of citizens should be safe to all friends, French, German, and English officers of government employment in preference to all others. .... 5. No person should be selected for political or diplomatic nomination or service who does not recognize an allegiance or obligation of due subordination to the Foreign prince, president, or head of

1 Davis, Portion of Slavery, 11.

2 Fremont's Vision of Freedom, 198.



refused to become the Senatorial candidate (or even  
apply for office) because of the character of his life. I  
see.....9.1 change in the laws of naturalization making  
citizenship dependent on "dispositionable" requisites  
for citizenship is necessary hereafter." This was successful in  
1864 in electing the Governor of Oregon and obtaining the  
Valence of power in the House of Representatives.<sup>1</sup>

With economic conditions so much improved in Oregon;  
with the depression in California; with the almost unanimous  
abstaining citizen; and with any American violently opposed  
to the large influx of foreigners, it is no wonder that our  
fifth term of the Metric bill will considerably outlast our  
1874.

<sup>1</sup> *America's National Review*, III. 67.



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